THE WELSH BRIDGE UNION CONSTITUTION JULY 2026~~2~~

1.0 NAME AND OBJECTS

1.1 The Union shall be called the Welsh Bridge Union (in this Constitution called the "**Union**".)
1.2 The objects of the Union shall be:
1.2.1 the promotion of the sport of contract bridge for Wales.
1.2.2 the control of the sport of contract bridge in Wales.

2.0 AREA ASSOCIATIONS

2.1 The Union shall be divided into four areas:
2.1.1 The North Wales Bridge Association - controlling that part of Wales north of a straight line joining Dolgellau and Welshpool (but excluding those towns), extending west to the coast and east to the English border.
2.1.2 The Mid Wales Bridge Association - controlling that part of Wales between North Wales, and two straight lines joining Lampeter to Cardigan (including those towns) extended west to the coast, and Lampeter to Builth Wells (including Builth Wells), extended east to the English border.
2.1.3 The West Wales Bridge Association - controlling that part of Wales south of Mid-Wales and west of a straight line joining Builth Wells to Bridgend (including Bridgend) extended south to the coast.
2.1.4 The East Wales Bridge Association - controlling that part of Wales south of Mid-Wales and east of West Wales.
2.2 Each Area Association shall appoint its own officers, control its own finances and conduct its own affairs within its area consistent with the Constitution of the Union.
2.3 Each Area Association shall submit a scrutinised statement of account at the end of each financial year to the Treasurer of the Union.
2.4 Each Area Association is empowered to levy on individual members and affiliated clubs an annual Area Association Subscription to be collected simultaneously with the Union Subscription.
2.5 Each Area Association shall be responsible for maintaining a list of affiliated clubs within its boundaries.

3.0 AFFILIATED CLUBS

3.1 A club, playing duplicate bridge at least once per week, with an identifiable playing location within Wales, or playing online, may apply for affiliation to the Welsh Bridge Union (WBU). An affiliated club is automatically deemed to be affiliated to the Area Association of the WBU within whose boundaries it lies. If a club is an on-line entity only and has no identifiable location, then these clubs may affiliate directly to the WBU. A club may apply to the WBU to affiliate to an appropriate Area Association and this needs to be approved by the Area Association as well as the WBU.
3.2 The club must provide its name, its playing location (if applicable) and the names of the club Secretary, Chairperson and Treasurer. The club must also provide the names of all its bridge playing members. Where the club has a member's consent to do so, it should include the member's postcode, telephone number and email address.
3.3 Every member of an affiliated club must be an individual member of the WBU, or the National Bridge Organisation (NBO) of one of the Home Nations (EBU, SBU, NIBA or CBAI).
3.4 An affiliated club shall be responsible for sending to the Honorary Membership Secretary each year, a "Membership Return". The Membership return shall consist of a list of names of all its bridge playing members (with full contact details as specified in paragraph 3.2), identifying the members who wish to have that club as their primary club of affiliation to the WBU, together with payment for the annual WBU affiliation fee and the annual affiliation fee for the applicable Area Association, for each such member.

3.5 The Membership Return and payment must be made between 1st April and 30th June each calendar year (the "**Renewal Period**"). Club affiliation will automatically lapse when any one year passes in which the club fails to provide the WBU with its Membership Return within the Renewal Period.

4.0 MEMBERSHIP

4.1 There shall be three classes of individual members and one of associate StepBridge On-Line member.

4.1.1 **Honorary Life Member** - Any individual so elected by the Council being a person who in the Council's opinion is worthy of the distinction by virtue of age, position or services to bridge.

4.1.2 **Ordinary Member** - An individual who is a member of an affiliated club and whose WBU membership fee and Area Association affiliation fee has been paid by an affiliated club. Any individual who is a member of more than one affiliated club may designate which is the club through which his or her membership is to be recorded (their primary club of affiliation). Only one club may pay the WBU affiliation fee for an individual. However, if an individual is a member of an affiliated club in a second Area Association, he or she may opt to have their Area Affiliation fee paid by that club thus registering a secondary Area Affiliation.

4.1.3 **Direct Member** - Any person who is not a member of an affiliated club shall be eligible to apply to the Chief Executive of the WBU to become a Direct Member. Acceptance of the application to become a Direct Member shall be at the discretion of the Chief Executive of the WBU.

4.1.4 **Associate StepBridge On-Line Member**. The fee for such associate membership is by levy of the StepBridgeUK (WBU) participation points payments. Such member is entitled to participate in on-line bridge played on the StepBridge UK (WBU) platform. Such member shall have no other entitlements. It is possible to be a Member and an Associate Member by virtue of 4.1.1, 4.1.2 and 4.1.3 and by playing on-line at StepBridge UK (WBU).

4.2 An individual shall cease to be a member of the WBU if he or she fails to pay the annual subscription applicable to their class of membership within the Renewal Period each year.

5.0 FINANCIAL YEAR

The financial year of the Union shall commence on the 1st April each year. Likewise the subscription year of the Union shall commence on 1st April each year. Annual subscriptions payable by members are due and payable in advance on the 1st April each year. The annual subscriptions shall be determined by the Management Committee. It shall be open to the Union (but not obligatory) to determine different rates of subscription for members and direct members.

6.0 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

6.1 Date - The Annual General Meeting of the Union shall be held on a date determined at the previous year's Annual General Meeting (but in any event not later than three months after the end of the Union's financial year) and at such place and time as the Council may decide. Notice convening the meeting (which notice shall include the Agenda for the meeting) shall be sent to each affiliated club and each direct member at least twenty-one days prior to the meeting. Each affiliated club shall receive with the notice convening the meeting a copy of the audited Accounts and Balance Sheet of the Union for the preceding financial year.

6.2 Business - The President of the Union shall prepare an Agenda of business to be transacted at the Annual General Meeting. The Agenda shall include:

6.2.1 the approval of the minutes of the previous general meeting;

6.2.2 the approval of the scrutinised Accounts and Balance Sheet of the Union for the preceding financial year;

6.2.3 the election of the Honorary Auditor for the next financial year

6.2.4 the election of those officers who, in accordance with article 8.2.2 of the Constitution, are elected at the Annual General Meeting;

6.2.5 the election of the Honorary Membership Secretary;

6.2.6 the determination of the date of the next Annual General Meeting;

6.2.7 the consideration of any item requested in writing by the Honorary Secretary of any Area Association;

6.2.8 the consideration of any proposed alteration and/or addition to this Constitution;

6.2.9 any other relevant business.

6.3 Nomination for Officers - Nomination for election as officers of the Union as in Paragraph 8.2.2 below must be in the hands of the Chief Executive not later than twenty eight days before the AGM.

6.4 Voting - All individual members of the Union (honorary life members, members and direct members) are entitled to be present at the Annual General Meeting and shall have one vote each. The President of the Union shall have an additional, casting, vote if necessary. No proxies are allowed.

6.5 Quorum - Twenty-five members of the Union shall form a quorum at the Annual General Meeting or a Special General Meeting.

7.0 SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING

7.1 A Special General Meeting of the Union may be called by the President if in his or her opinion there is business which properly requires to be transacted at such a meeting.

7.2 A Special General Meeting of the Union shall be called on a written request by the Honorary Secretary of any of the Area Associations. The request must state the object or objects for which the Special General Meeting is called and the meeting shall be held within six weeks of receipt of the request by the Chief Executive of the Union at a venue to be decided by the President.

7.3 Notice convening the Special General Meeting incorporating the Agenda therefore shall be sent to each affiliated club and to each direct member at least twenty-eight days prior to the meeting.

7.4 No business may be transacted at a Special General Meeting other than that contained in the Agenda for the meeting.

8.0 THE COUNCIL

8.1 Introductory

The Council of the Union is the central governing body of the Union. It oversees the Management Committee, which is responsible for the management of the Union's affairs.

8.2 Composition

8.2.1 The Council of the Union shall consist of the officers of the Union, the immediate Past President and members elected as representatives to the Council by each Area Association.

8.2.2 Officers of the Union – The following officers shall be elected at each AGM from candidates proposed by Council or by Area Associations, each having signified in advance in writing a willingness to stand for election:

8.2.2.1 President - who is elected at the Annual General Meeting and who will serve for one year, but shall be eligible for re-election for one further year at the next ensuing Annual General Meeting of the Union. The office of President shall be filled successively by a member of each Area Association in rotation. The rota would now continue ... East, West, North, Mid Wales. Additionally, after holding office for two years a sitting President may retain their office each year if invited to stay in office (a) by all four Area Associations or (b) by three of the four Area Associations and by the majority of members voting at the AGM.

8.2.2.2 Vice Presidents - these officers shall be the Chairmen of the Area Associations. Their names shall be advised in writing to the Chief Executive of the Union by the Honorary Secretaries of the Area Associations.

8.2.2.3 Honorary Treasurer who shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting of the Union.

8.2.2.4 Honorary Tournament Organiser who shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting of the Union.

8.2.2.5 Honorary Master Points Secretary who shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting of the Union.

8.2.3 Other Council Members

8.2.3.1 Immediate Past President.

8.2.3.2 Two representatives to the Council appointed by each of the Area Associations. Their names must be advised in writing to the Chief Executive of the Union by the Honorary Secretaries of the Area Associations respectively.

8.2.4 Chief Executive

8.2.4.1 Council shall appoint a Chief Executive from applicants made directly to Council or via Area Associations. The Chief Executive shall attend all Council meetings but shall not have a vote. The Contract, remuneration, and duties of the Chief Executive shall be negotiated by Council annually at the meeting of council close to the Annual General Meeting.

8.3 Meetings

The Council shall meet at least once a year, including a meeting within two months of the Annual General Meeting of the Union. Eight members of the Council shall form a quorum. Only the following members of the Council shall have a vote: President, Immediate Past President, Vice Presidents,

Honorary Treasurer and the appointed representatives from the Area Associations. The President shall be the Chairman of the meetings of Council. In the absence of the President those present at the meeting shall elect from amongst themselves a Chairman for that meeting only. The Chairman of the meeting shall have a second, casting, vote if necessary. No other Individual may have more than one vote. The President shall prepare an agenda for each meeting of the Council and will include therein any motions received in writing by the Chief Executive of the Union at least twenty-eight days prior to the Council Meeting in question.

8.4 Appointment of Committees

8.4.1 At the meeting of the council close to the Annual General Meeting of the Union the Council shall appoint the following committees:

8.4.1.1 Management Committee – consisting of the President, Chief Executive, Honorary Treasurer, Honorary Tournament Officer, and four members, one nominated by each Area Association.

8.4.1.2 Finance - consisting of the President, Honorary Treasurer and one representative nominated by each of the Area Associations.

8.4.1.3 Selection - consisting of at least five and not more than seven members. One member may be nominated by each of the Area Associations, and the remainder to be elected by the Council.

8.4.1.4 Laws and Ethics - consisting of between three and five members elected by the Council, with powers to co-opt as necessary with the President's approval.

8.4.2 If not appointed as voting members, the President and Chief Executive shall be invited to attend at least one formal meeting each year of these Committees, but without voting power.

8.5 Powers

The Council shall have power to:

8.5.1 receive the Management Committee's reports;

8.5.2 advise the Management Committee, particularly on matters of concern to the Areas and clubs;

8.5.3 submit recommendations for any alterations to this Constitution or any rules made hereunder to the Annual General Meeting of the Union;

8.5.4 in the interim between general meetings to make by-laws operative until the next general meeting not inconsistent with the Constitution or the International Laws of Contract Bridge;

8.6 Remuneration

The responsibility for determination of honoraria and other remuneration rests with the Council subject to the recommendations of the those members of the Management Committee unaffected financially, acting as a group for this purpose.

9.0 MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

9.1 The Management Committee is the body responsible for the management of the Union's affairs.

9.2 Membership: the President, Chief Executive, Honorary Treasurer, Honorary Tournament Officer, and one member nominated by each Area Association and approved by the Council.

9.3 Conduct: The Management Committee should elect its own chairman. It should meet regularly face-to-face or by using means such as email or telephone conferencing. Decisions should be reached collectively.

9.4 Powers and Duties: The Management Committee shall have management authority over the affairs of the Union, including, but not limited to, the power to:

9.4.1 plan the programme of Union tournaments, congresses and other events and ensure the running thereof;

9.4.2 grant patronage or licences to such Open Bridge Tournaments and Congresses played within or outside Wales on such conditions as it deems fit;

9.4.3 make arrangements for all International or other National representative matches played within Wales;

9.4.4 incur, within the available resources, such expenditure as it considers appropriate in pursuit of the objects of the Union;

9.4.5 appoint such Committees and persons as it may from time to time determine with such powers as it considers expedient to delegate;

9.4.6 receive estimates of income and expenditure; monitor all items of expenditure of the Union;

9.4.7 deal with any master point matters, consulting with the Honorary Master Point Secretary;

9.4.8 report regularly on its activities by publishing frequent reports on the WBU website, and by annual reports to Council and to the AGM;

9.4.9 where vacancies occur in mid-year for officers or in committees normally appointed by Council or by the AGM, to make interim appointments which must then be confirmed by Council or by the AGM when the relevant body next meets.

9.4.10 It should be noted that in "emergency situations" such as covid, the Management Committee may operate outside the constitution from time to time.

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10.0 PRESIDENT

10.1 The President is the principal elected officer of the Union and its titular head and shall be responsible for the convening of and presiding at meetings of the Council and General Meetings of the Union; and shall order the Agenda of business for such meetings.

10.2 In the event of the resignation, death or other permanent incapacity of the President, the last surviving immediate Past President of the Union willing and able to act shall undertake temporarily the responsibility of the President until a meeting of Council can appoint one of its members to carry out the duties of the President until the next Annual General Meeting of the Union.

11.0 CHIEF EXECUTIVE

11.1 The Chief Executive is the chief appointed officer of the Union. He or she is responsible for ensuring the effective operation of the Management Committee, and for performing such specific tasks as are agreed within that body.

11.2.1 The Chief Executive is also Secretary to the Union, and as such shall:

11.2.2 issue notices of general meetings to affiliated clubs and direct members and of all other meetings to those so entitled to attend;

11.2.3 ensure that a record is kept of all business transacted at the Annual General Meeting and all other meetings;

11.2.4 arrange the annual publication to all members of the Union of a competition brochure containing all necessary details of National Competitions run under the auspices of the Union.

12.0 HONORARY TREASURER

The Honorary Treasurer shall:

12.1.1 keep books and accounts showing the financial affairs of the Union;

12.1.2 receive all monies payable to the Union;

12.1.3 submit to each Annual General Meeting duly audited Accounts and Balance Sheet for the preceding year;

12.1.4 consult the Management Committee if there are extraordinary items submitted for payment;

12.1.5 prepare a budget for consideration by the Management Committee.

13.0 HONORARY AUDITOR

13.1 The Honorary Auditor shall:

13.1.1 examine the books and accounts of the Union as deemed necessary, and

13.1.2 if appropriate, certify the Accounts and Balance Sheet submitted at the end of each year as showing a true and correct record of the financial position of the Union, including any qualifications he or she may consider necessary.

14.0 HONORARY TOURNAMENT ORGANISER

14.1 In consultation with other members of the Management Committee, and with the tournament organisers of the Area Associations, the Honorary Tournament Organiser shall be responsible for organising all arrangements necessary for the conduct of National Competitions run under the auspices of the Union.

15.0 HONORARY MASTER POINT SECRETARY

15.1 The Honorary Master Point Secretary shall:

15.1.1 maintain the online database.

15.1.2 keep a record of Master Points.

15.1.3 arrange the periodical publication of the Master Point Ranking List.

16.0 HONORARY MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

16.1 The Honorary Membership Secretary shall:

16.1.1 receive lists of members and their subscriptions from clubs;

16.1.2 receive subscriptions from direct members;

16.1.3 pass subscriptions to the treasurer;

16.1.4 keep a record of all members of the Union.

17.0 FINANCE COMMITTEE

17.1 The Finance Committee shall meet at least once per year and shall:

17.1.1 receive an estimate of income and expenditure for the year;

17.1.2 monitor all items of expenditure of the Union;
17.1.3 make recommendations to the Management Committee on financial matters;
17.1.4 deal with other relevant financial matters of the Union.

18.0 SELECTION COMMITTEE

18.1 For all representative events for which the Union has been invited to field a team, subject to the Conditions of Contest, the Selection Committee shall have the right to select players, appoint the captains and hold trials where it deems necessary. The Chief Executive, ex officio is Secretary to the Committee without voting rights and shall convene the first meeting of a new Committee

18.2 Any Selector who expresses an interest in being a player on a representative team shall not be present or take part in discussions relating to selection of that team or matters of Trials format that significantly influence team selection.

19.0 LAWS & ETHICS COMMITTEE

19.1 Composition
19.1.1 This Committee shall appoint its own Chairman from amongst its members.
19.1.2 At any meeting of the Committee the Chairman at that time will have an additional, casting, vote if necessary.
19.2 Discipline
19.2.1 The following are considered offences if committed by an individual member of the Union:
19.2.1.1 whilst playing Contract Bridge, or any variation thereon, either offends against the accepted standards of conduct or plays unfairly; or
19.2.1.2 is guilty of misconduct in connection with the game of Contract Bridge or any variation thereon at any time whatsoever; or
19.2.1.3 in connection with the game of Contract Bridge or any variation thereon conducts himself or herself unreasonably so as to give offence to any other individual.
19.2.2 Each allegation under sub-paragraph 19.2.1 hereof shall be made in writing to the Secretary of the Union who shall refer the matter to the Committee as soon as possible.
19.2.3 The Committee shall make such enquiries as appropriate into any matter which is alleged against any individual member under the provisions of sub-paragraph 19.2.1 hereof.
19.2.4 If the Committee considers there is prima facie a breach of sub-paragraph 19.2.1 hereof then they will conduct a hearing, and:
19.2.4.1 give notice in writing of the hearing and of the substance of each and every allegation to each individual member against whom such an allegation is made;
19.2.4.2 at the hearing allow such individual member to defend himself or herself against each allegation which is made, to make a statement of his or her own case, to call witnesses, to question witnesses, and to allow him or her to be represented by one person of his or her own choosing;
19.2.4.3 suspend from the Committee for the purposes of the hearing, any member thereof who is in any way personally involved in any allegation which is the subject of the hearing;
19.2.4.4 make findings of fact consequent upon such hearing;
19.2.4.5 make decisions consequent on such findings;
19.2.4.6 provide the Secretary of the Union with its findings of fact and decisions;
19.2.4.7 provide the Secretary of the Union with such further report of its proceedings as the Council of the Union shall from time to time require.
19.2.5 The Committee may, at its absolute discretion, decide that such individual member be expelled from the Union or be suspended from membership of the Union or from participation in one or more competitions of the Union for such period as the Committee shall consider fit, or be fined (such fine shall not exceed 25 times the current annual subscription to the Union), or be admonished. The committee shall also decide whether such decision be published, and whether such decision be notified to European Bridge League for international promulgation.
19.2.6 When the Committee uses its powers under the provisions of sub-paragraph 19.2.4 hereof such decision may be appealed as to findings of fact and/or punishment. The Appeal will be arranged by the Council of the Union.
19.2.7 The Committee shall notify the individual member in writing of its findings of fact and of its decisions and of procedures of appeal; such notification shall be sent by registered post or recorded delivery to the member's address last notified to the Chief Executive of the Union.
19.3 Authorisation of systems and conventions
The Committee shall have the power to authorise the systems and conventions which may be used in competitions organised or licensed by the Union and the conditions (if any) attached to the use of any system or convention.
19.4 National Authority
The Committee is the National Authority referred to in Law 93C, and hears all appeals to the national Authority from any event held in Wales or otherwise licensed by the WBU. The Committee's decision

is final under this sub-paragraph.

20.0 ELIGIBILITY

20.1 For International events, the eligibility rules of the organisers shall apply,

20.2 In representative matches between areas or parts of Wales, only persons of Welsh birth or Welsh parentage/grandparentage or who are domiciled in Wales shall be eligible to play.

21.0 COPIES OF THIS CONSTITUTION

A copy of this constitution shall be made available to every member of the Union.

22.0 ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION

22.1 No alteration and / or addition to this Constitution shall be made except at the Annual General Meeting or a Special General Meeting called for the purpose and of which twenty-eight clear days' notice shall be given with a copy of the proposed alteration and / or addition.

22.2 Any change in this Constitution will require a two-thirds majority of those present and voting at the General Meeting of the Union.

This version of the WBU Constitution is that agreed at the WBU Annual General Meeting in July 2022 and further amended at the WBU Annual General Meeting in July 2026.